Dogs that See for
the Blind.

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Dogs That See for the Blind

Trained Not to Cross the Street against Traffic; No Amount of Pulling Will Move This Dog So Long as the Red Light Says "Stop"; This Is Just One of the Shepherd Dog's Lessons

BY THE aid of specially trained dogs and a system developed in Switzerland, the blind no longer need hesitate in the city streets nor are they dependent upon friends or hired helpers in going about their regular business pursuits.

In Switzerland, Mrs. Harrison Eustis, an enthusiast in the breeding and training of shepherd dogs, has adapted the intelligence of this family of canine friends to the special needs of the blind. In Switzerland these dogs have learned to do many things, such as providing special help for the Swiss army in certain duties and for aid in police efforts.

The use of dogs in helping the blind is not new in the sense that they have never before been so utilized. Some dogs have been trained in individual instances. But now, using special methods, a school takes the canine pupils, and after a course that is based on the psychology of the dog and the needs of the blind, graduates are ready to work faithfully and unerringly, using their keen sense and intelligence, and actually providing, for the human being unable to see, the sense of sight.

The man unable to see, hesitant, uncertain, falteringly reaches the yard. Using his cane and tapping his way along, the gate is found. Pedestrians watch, anxious to help, but not wishing to intrude. Then the sightless one gives a whistle. The dogs that are playing in the sunlight beyond the gate listen. Then one dog—one special dog—instantly recognizes the whistle, leaves the others and bounds toward the man who has whistled. Putting his cold nose in the hand of the blind man, he thus signals that he is ready for service.

Training the Dog to Pick Up Gloves or Packages Dropped by His Owner and to Carry Them if Necessary

The man then stoops over, puts a specially designed harness on the dog. The dog waits for it to be buckled. The man lights a cigaret; then, with the strap from the harness in his hand, turns, saying "Forward," and starts off briskly down the street, confident, unafraid, the dog trotting just ahead.

Reaching a street crossing where there are traffic lights, the dog looks. If the red signal or the "stop" sign is showing, the dog sits down and the man waits, knowing by the movement of the specially designed harness that the dog is waiting for the proper moment to cross. As soon as the "go" sign is shown or the light turns to green, man and dog cross confidently, with assurance and with safety.

Reaching the office building where the man works, in which there is the usual revolving door, the dog waits for the proper moment and then pulls the man quickly forward and into the door, permitting the blind man to stand on the outside, stepping with the door and out on the opposite side. Easily and with absolute assurance, the sightless man follows the seeing eye of the canine friend.

So expertly does the dog obey the three simple commands of "Forward," "Right," "Left," that no one on the street thinks of looking. There are no embarrassing moments or offers of assistance. Not one in a thousand even recognizes that the man is blind unless he is familiar with his movements or an acquaintance.

For about fifteen years these highly trained dogs have been used in just such ways in Germany and Switzerland. It is within the last few months that the method has been adapted to America, where the dogs must learn the psychology of Americans, the differences of traffic, and a new language.

In Nashville, Tenn., Morris S. Frank is educating the great shepherd dogs for the purpose of helping the blind. Hearing about the European method, he was at first skeptical. He investigated. It seemed possible that here was a method that could be used in this country. "I decided that, if such work were really possible, I wanted such a dog for myself," Mr. Frank, who is blind, explained.

"I wrote to Mrs. Eustis to find out where I could obtain such a dog. She answered that it was true that these shepherds would do these things and that, while they could not be procured in America, she would be glad to have a dog trained for use under American conditions and train me with the dog if I could take the time to come to Switzerland for my part of the training.

"Would I go to Switzerland to regain my sight? I would and I did."

"When I came back, I was so exultant with my new-found freedom that I did not stop to fully realize its meaning. A few weeks later, however, when I came to a corner and my dog guided me across a street crowded with traffic, I heard the tapping of a blind man's cane as he stood at the curb and waited for some passing stranger to tell him if he could safely cross; there was a twinge of conscience. Such was the origin of the idea of developing 'The Seeing Eye.'"

Those interested in the welfare of the blind are co-operating in making these methods, found so useful in Europe, pos-

sible for the needs of America. These great creatures must be adapted to our traffic conditions, our laws, and the American temperament. Further, the dog must learn the language of America and be able to obey the words spoken.

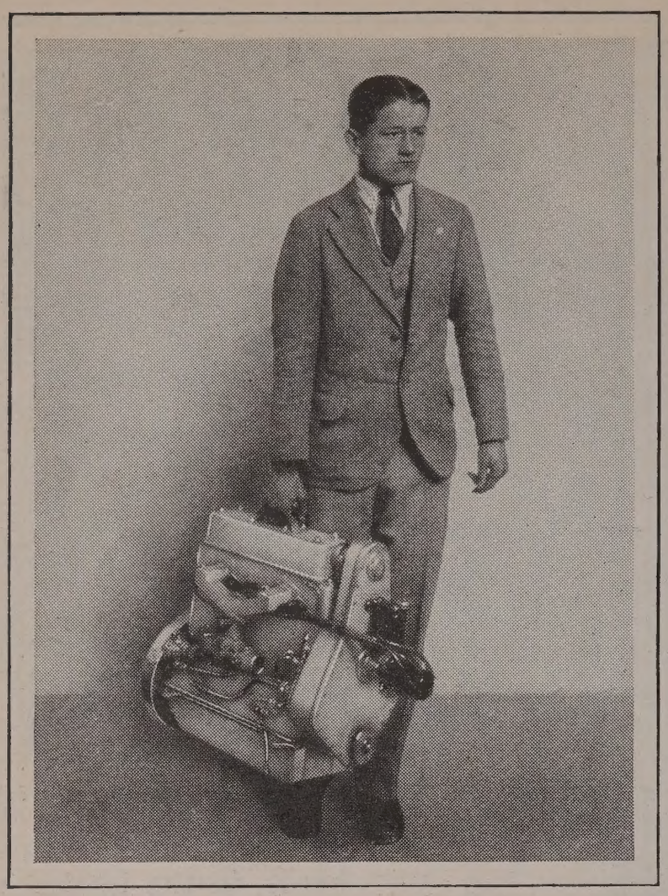
"Buddy Fortunate Fields," as Mr. Frank has named his own dog, has guided him "safely through all kinds of traffic from the crowded streets of New York City to the little country roads of a Tennessee back village," according to his own words. Once the dog is trained, there is no further worry for the blind man.

The German shepherd is especially adapted to this sort of personal service, says Mr. Frank. In the first place, it has the requisite intelligence and what might be called the "will to service," developed through scores of years of work for man in tending flocks and herds, in the intricate and exacting duties of police dog, as factory, museum and railroad guard, in the various services connected with war work and as courier, Red Cross, liaison and listening-post dog.

Center and Bottom, Mr. Morris Frank with His Trained Dog, and, Top, E. S. Humphrey, an Inspector, Training a Dog in Traffic

Then, too, the shepherd is the right size and weight for a blind leader. The messages which the dog transmits to his master in this service are of a tactical sort. The dog wears a leather harness with a rather stiff, short loop, which is held in the man's left hand. At intersections, curbs and steps, the dog sits down, and for complete success it must be an animal of sufficient weight to have this act instantly transmitted to the palm of the man who is being led.

Finally, according to Mr. Frank, the shepherd dog has the requisite attributes of character. He is courageous, dependable, unswervingly loyal. The assertion that the shepherd has wolf blood in its veins is absolutely without foundation. He is the descendant, without admixture and bred up in bodily form and mental ability only by selection, of one of the oldest breeds on the European continent.



A Portable Four-Cycle Inboard Motor for Small Boats Weighs But 100 Pounds

INBOARD MOTOR IS PORTABLE AND EASILY INSTALLED

Weighing but 100 pounds, a portable four-cycle inboard motor has been placed on the market to transform your boat into a serviceable cruiser, or for interchangeable use on several boats just as outboard motors are employed. The engine is conveniently carried by a handle and can be removed simply by taking out four thumbscrews. The intake and exhaust connections through flexible hose are so arranged as to enable instant disconnection. According to the manufacturers, the engine is easily started and handled, runs smoothly and quietly, and consumes little gasoline and oil. It is suitable for use in boats from twelve feet in length up.

There are nearly sixty landing fields for airplanes in Alaska.

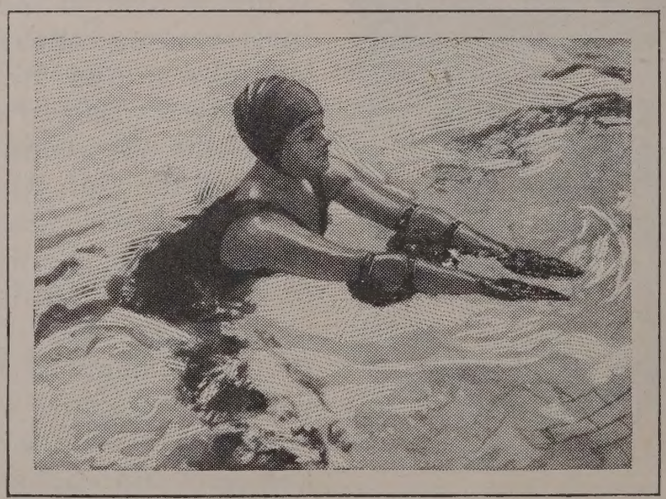
PLANTS AND SHRUBS OF DESERT NOW GUARDED BY LAW

To protect desert holly, Joshua trees and other growths of the deserts, California and Nevada recently have passed laws making it a misdemeanor to dig up, destroy or pick the flowers of some varieties of plants that grow in the dry places. Between Tonopah and Las Vegas, in southern Nevada, a wide expanse of desert country, several hundred miles long, is called the west's largest and most beautiful natural flower garden. In April and May, in years when spring rains are normal, this stretch of country is a mass of flowers of all shapes and hues.

CHEMICAL HAS SCENT OF MUSK LIKE NATURAL PRODUCT

Artificial musks, that sell as high as $275 per ounce, are being manufactured in the chemists' laboratories. Samples of the synthetic scents were passed around at a recent meeting of scientists, and even experts in perfumes were unable to detect the difference between some of the chemical products and the natural musk. The success of the chemist in this direction may prevent the extinction of the musk deer which are now being killed at the rate of 50,000 or 100,000 a year in the mountains of Tibet and western China. Musks are also found in plants, but their chemical composition differs from that of animal musk.

INFLATED PADS ON ELBOWS AID SWIMMING PUPILS



Inflated Elbow Pads Keep the Novice Afloat While He Practices Leg Strokes in Learning to Swim

To help keep the body afloat while learning to swim, an English instructor has devised inflated pads which are strapped to the elbows. They do not interfere with the arm motions and are especially helpful in practicing leg strokes, since the wearer does not worry about sink-

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